

MEMORANDUM

June 24, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: City Leadership Team
Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Mellisa Morphy, Acting Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Jason Twa, City Clerk & Chief Election Officer

SUBJECT: Report Back – Expansion of Assistive Ballot Marking Devices

RTS #: 18453

At its meeting on June 9, 2026, Council directed staff to explore the feasibility of providing four additional voting places where voters requiring the use of an assistive ballot marking device could cast their ballot independently, in addition to the proposed voting opportunities at the Election Office from October 3-17. Council further directed staff to consider geographic distribution to maximize accessibility, convenience and privacy for voters requiring assisted voting services, and to recommend a communications plan.

Implementation Plan

Staff have reviewed opportunities to expand access to assisted voting services during the 2026 General Local Election. In addition to the proposed assisted voting opportunities at the Election Office, staff will make the assistive ballot marking device available at four voting places distributed across the city.

The locations will allow voters who require the use of an assistive ballot marking device to access the service closer to their local community and on voting days (October 3, 7, 10, 13 and 17). Selection criteria included geographic distribution across Vancouver, proximity to public transit, availability of onsite parking, the accessibility of the voting place and the ability to accommodate election operations in larger facilities.

With respect to accessibility, staff prioritized locations with voting rooms on the main floor, accessible building entrances and pathways and accessible washrooms. In addition, the size of the voting space was considered to ensure voters have sufficient room to comfortably use the devices while maintaining the privacy and secrecy of their vote.

The proposed locations are:

- Dunbar Community Centre, 4747 Dunbar St.
- Renfrew Park Community Centre, 2929 East 22nd Ave.

- Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, 181 Roundhouse Mews
- Sunset Community Centre, 6810 Main St.

Communications Plan

As recommended by Council, staff have developed a communications plan to inform voters about the expanded availability of assistive ballot marking devices. Staff will promote the devices as part of the City's broader election accessibility information, sharing it through multiple channels and formats to reach voters who may choose this voting tool, including:

- Promotion in the voter information package mailed to all registered voters and in the voter information pamphlet, which will be translated into braille and the 11 most spoken languages in Vancouver and available online, at all Vancouver Public Library branches, at all Community Centres and through community organizations.
- On the election webpages with information explaining how to use the devices and where they are located.
- Media releases promoting the devices and their locations.
- Face to face outreach at events, supported by printed material.
- Direct sharing with the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, organizations that support persons with disabilities and the City's network of contacts connected to the Accessibility Strategy.
- Inclusion in the email and phone outreach delivered by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), which the City has engaged to share election information with its members.
- Social media posts in the weeks leading up to the election.

The communications plan is intended to meet voters where they are at. Staff have considered both language access and the accessibility of the materials and providing information across print, digital, audio, video and in-person formats.

Financial Implications

The estimated cost of deploying four additional assistive ballot marking devices on voting days is approximately \$14,500, consisting of:

- Devices, peripherals, and shipping: \$11,420
- Training of election workers: \$2,760
- Miscellaneous supplies: \$320

These costs will be funded through the City's Election Reserve and are incremental to the original estimated 2026 election budget of \$9.4 million.

Summary

Staff support the provision of four additional voting places equipped with assistive ballot marking devices available on voting days to complement the assisted voting services at the Election Office. This approach will enhance accessibility, convenience and voter privacy while maintaining operational feasibility and election integrity.